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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, SEMEP, AND NEA/IPA; NSC FOR
SHAPIRO/KUMAR; JOINT STAFF FOR LTGEN SELVA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/14/2020
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [KPAL](#) [GZ](#) [IS](#)
SUBJECT: HAMAS CALLS PUBLICLY FOR A HALT TO GAZA ROCKET FIRE

Classified By: Consul General Daniel Rubinstein
for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (U) On January 12, Hamas "Prime Minister" Ismail Haniyeh publicly called on all armed factions in the Gaza Strip to observe the de facto cease-fire in place since Israeli combat operations in Gaza ceased in January 2009. In his statement, Haniyeh urged other factions to "reinforce the national agreement" and "work in a joint spirit to protect our people and our interests and to block any possible Israeli aggression against our people." Haniyeh's statement came on the heels of a January 9-10 spike in rockets and mortars launched from the Gaza Strip into Israel (see para 4).

¶2. (C) Ismail Faraj, West Bank Director of Operations for the Palestinian Authority's General Intelligence (GI), told Post on January 12 that Hamas was engaged in "intense contact" with other armed factions in the Gaza Strip, and was promoting a complete halt in rocket and mortar fire into Israel. According to Faraj, Hamas also informed rival factions that violations of the unofficial cease-fire would be considered a "threat to national consensus," and treated as individual criminal violations rather than acts of resistance against occupation. Unnamed Hamas officials confirmed this account in local press reports published January 13, saying that while contact with other armed groups had not yet produced an agreement, talks were ongoing.

¶3. (SBU) Background: On the weekend of January 8-10, two rockets and eight mortar shells were fired from the Gaza Strip into Israel. In the early hours of January 9, two mortar shells fell in an open field in the Eshkol region. That night, two Qassam rockets landed in an uninhabited area near Sderot. On January 10, four mortar shells were fired from Gaza towards Israel; two landed inside the Gaza Strip, and two in open land inside Israel. No injuries or damage was reported. Twenty-four rockets have been fired since January 1 from Gaza into Israel, with Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Ansar al-Sunna, and other groups variously claiming responsibility. End Background.

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